

IN THE CLAIMS:

The following is a complete listing of claims in this application.

Claims 1-30 (canceled).

31. (currently amended) A specimen container comprising:
a body having a defined circumference and an opening for placement of a specimen;

a lid to cover the opening of the body;

a label extending around a portion of the circumference of the body, defining thereby a viewing window into the body enabling viewing of tube contents; and

~~a substantially continuous colored indicator band extending around the opening of the body, and sufficiently around the circumference that the colored indicator band is readily viewable from all sides of the container; the band being located on the body adjacent the opening and viewable when the lid is placed over the opening and the container is placed in a specimen rack wherein the indicator band is incorporated on the body of the container prior to a specimen being located within the body of the container,~~

the colored indicator band having a color of brightness greater than 40% and a saturation greater than 40%.

32. (currently amended) The specimen container of claim 31 wherein the indicator band is a second label that is applied to the body.

33. (previously presented) The specimen container of claim 31 wherein the indicator band is integrally formed with the body.

34. (previously presented) The specimen container of claim 31 wherein the indicator band is printed on the body.

35. (previously presented) The specimen container of claim 31 wherein the indicator band includes a human and/or

machine readable element.

36. (previously presented) The specimen container of claim 31 wherein the indicator band includes a removable tag.

37. (previously presented) The specimen container of claim 36 wherein the removable tag is an adhesive tag.

Claims 38-43 (canceled).

44. (currently amended) An unused specimen container for use in a method of operating a medical clinic, comprising the steps of:

receiving or preparing unused specimen containers having priority indicators on the bodies of the containers, and receiving or preparing unused specimen containers without priority indicators,

determining whether patients passing through the clinic require priority or non-priority treatment,

selecting unused specimen containers with or without priority indicators according to the priority required for the respective patients,

filling the selected priority or non-priority containers with specimens taken from the respective patients, labeling the respective containers, and

sending the filled and labeled containers to a laboratory for testing in accord with their respective labels and priority indicators,

~~said container having a body with an opening for receipt of a specimen, and a priority indicator on the body which is visible when a lid is in place to close the opening,~~

wherein said step of selecting unused priority containers comprises obtaining a container comprising:

a body having a defined circumference and an opening for placement of a specimen;

a lid to cover the opening of the body;

a label extending around a portion of the circumference

of the body, defining thereby a viewing window into the body;
and

a colored indicator band extending around the opening of
the body, and sufficiently around the circumference that the
colored indicator band is readily viewable from all sides of
the container when the lid is placed over the opening and the
container is placed in a specimen rack,

the colored indicator band having a color of brightness
greater than 40% and a saturation greater than 40%.

Claim 45 (canceled).

46. (currently amended) A container according to claim 44
wherein the priority indicator is integral with ~~a data~~ the
label.

Claims 47-51 (canceled).

52. (new) The specimen container according to claim 31,
wherein the indicator band is a label that is fluorescent.

53. (new) The specimen container according to claim 31,
wherein the indicator band is a portion of the label.

54. (new) A method of manufacturing a specimen container
comprising:

forming a body having a defined circumference an opening
for placement of a specimen;

attaching a label around a portion of the circumference,
defining thereby a viewing window into the body; and

incorporating a colored indicator band around the opening
of the body such that the colored indicator band is readily
viewable from any side of the container when a lid is placed
over the opening and the container is placed in a specimen
container rack,

the colored indicator band having a color of brightness
greater than 40% and a saturation greater than 40%.

55. (new) The method of claim 54, wherein the step of
incorporating the indicator band includes applying the label

or a second label to the body.

56. (new) The method of claim 54, wherein the step of incorporating the indicator band includes integrally forming the band with the body.

57. (new) The method of claim 54, wherein the step of incorporating the indicator band includes printing the band on the body.